



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
A BATTERY, 1st BATTALION, 31st FIELD ARTILLERY
5955 ROTHWELL ST.
FORT SILL, OKLAHOMA 73503**

23 June 2017

Dear friends and Family members,

FROM THE COMMANDER:

I am Captain (CPT) Michael D. Fahlmann, the Battery Commander of your Soldier's Initial Entry Training into the United States Army. Your Soldier arrived safely at the battery and has already begun Basic Combat Training (BCT).

Over the next few months your Soldier will learn the basic skills that are required to survive and win on today's battlefield. The training will be strenuous and demanding, but the tasks performed will help each Soldier develop the discipline and self-confidence necessary to be a successful Soldier in today's Army.

I want you to know that the Cadre training your Soldier are a very dedicated group of professionals who are genuinely concerned about the health, welfare, and training of each Soldier. We consider your Warrior to be the Army's most important asset and I will personally ensure that we will make your Soldier's experience challenging yet rewarding.

COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR SOLDIER

By now you should have already received a phone call from your Soldier. All Soldiers are given the opportunity to call home within the first 72 hours upon arrival BUT NOT again until around the fourth week of training. This is also contingent upon them meeting all of their training requirements and not having any issues with misconduct. Please understand that phone usage is a privilege the Soldiers must earn week to week through their motivation, performance, and discipline.

I ask that you not attempt to contact your Soldier by phone. If there is anything you should be concerned with regarding the health and welfare of your Soldier, the 1SG and/or I will personally let you know.

LETTERS/ PACKAGES

Whether or not this is your Soldier's first time away from home, I am sure that your Soldier will miss you a great deal as you presumably will miss your Soldier, too. I strongly encourage you to write at every opportunity; you can be assured that your Soldier will have time to write you as well. When writing your Soldier use the following address:

**Rank Last Name, First Name, MI
__ Platoon, A Battery, 1-31st FA
5955 Rothwell Street
Fort Sill, OK 73503**

For __ Platoon, write the Platoon number of your Soldier; 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th. If you don't have the platoon number it's ok, it just takes us longer to sort it. Ask your Soldier for their Platoon number!

Packages are authorized but strongly discouraged. Your Soldier is being allowed to get everything he/she needs here at the local Post Exchange (Shopping Store). **Mail in the Military takes a little longer than in the civilian world. It is very common for you to receive several letters from your Soldier before they receive any of yours.** When it arrives at the Fort Sill Post Office the Army takes over and any USPS tracking will stop. The mail has to be sorted at each level from post all the way down to us, and that can take several days. Mail is never held and Soldiers do not have to do push-ups or any other physical training to receive their mail. Please observe the following guidelines when sending mail:

- ✓ No alcohol or products containing alcohol, tobacco, or narcotics
- ✓ No weapons
- ✓ No radios, TV's, cell phones, cameras, or other electronic devices
- ✓ No pornographic or morally questionable materials
- ✓ No magazines
- ✓ **No food items**

DRILL SERGEANTS

Relax, your Soldier is not reliving those first 30 minutes of *Full Metal Jacket*. Today's Soldiers are treated fairly, firmly, and with dignity and respect. **Abuse, Hazing, Discrimination and Sexual Harassment of any kind by ANY Drill Sergeant is not tolerated.** Drill Sergeants are selected from among the best Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) in the Army, and are highly qualified to train recruits.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCIES

Should an emergency arise, the best means of notifying your Soldier is through your local **American Red Cross**. The field office in your area will contact the Lawton, Oklahoma field office who will, in turn, contact me. In extreme cases, such as serious injury or death, affecting immediate family members, an emergency leave of absence may be granted. Other leaves of absence during training are not normally authorized.

WHAT HAPPENS IF MY SOLDIER IS INJURED DURING TRAINING?

Should any injury occur, your Soldier will receive appropriate medical attention from Ft. Sill's large, professional medical staff at state-of-the-art medical facilities at Reynolds Army Community Hospital. Additionally, Drill Sergeants are Combat Lifesaver qualified and carry medical aid kits during all training. Injuries that prevent Soldiers from graduating will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Any Soldier who is injured during training and cannot complete the remaining training requirements will be transferred to either Warrior Therapy and Rehabilitation Program (WTRP) or be put on Medical Hold (MED Hold) to recover. Once the Soldier recovers, he/she will be sent to another training unit to resume the portion of training he/she missed.

If a Soldier fails to meet any of the graduation requirements, every effort will be made for the Soldier to retake the portion he/she fails. In the event the Soldier cannot pass or retake that portion, he/she will be considered for a transfer (recycle) to another battery to complete the remaining training requirements. If a Soldier fails the final BPFT (Basic Physical Fitness Test), they will be given an opportunity to pass during the make-up BPFT. We will make every effort

to provide that Soldier an opportunity to pass and move on to AIT. Passing the BPFT is a graduation requirement and if, despite our best efforts, he/she still cannot pass prior to graduation, the Soldier may be assigned to the Fitness Training Unit (FTU) based up their score. Upon passing the BPFT at FTU, the Soldier will move on to his/her Advanced Individual Training (AIT). We will ensure that your Soldier is afforded the opportunity to call home in order to keep you updated on his/her status.

TOWNHALL MEETING / FAMILY DAY / GRADUATION

For those who arrive on **Wednesday**, the day before family day, there will be a TOWN- HALL Meet up with a question and answer session to help facilitate and ease your visit while attending family day and graduation as well as your Soldiers opportunity, if earned, to go on a day pass with you. This meeting will be held at **6:00 pm on 23 August 2017 at the Gunners Inn.** Directions will be posted on the FACEBOOK page that you can access below. We will conduct the Family Day presentation, demonstrating the key events that occur during basic combat training. The presentation will begin at **09:00am on 24 August 2017 at the battery area.** After the ceremony, your Soldier will be released on pass to you, but will have to return for accountability at exactly 8:00pm that evening. The next day **25 August 2017**, your Soldier will graduate at the Cache Creek Chapel Complex at **1:00 pm**. More information about both events will be released as the dates draw closer so you can make appropriate travel plans. Utilize the following Lawton, Oklahoma Chamber-of-Commerce website which lists all of the various hotels and motels in the area for your convenience.

We understand that you will want to make travel plans early in order to get the best travel deals. However, please talk to your Soldier at every opportunity regarding their graduation status. We recommend that you DO NOT make any plans or travel arrangements which cannot be changed or canceled until you have received notice from your Soldier that they will graduate. Your Soldier *should* know their graduation status by the end of the 8th week of training. In a few weeks, we will post specific graduation information on our website.

As per normal scheduling, your Soldier will ship to AIT beginning the morning after graduation via government-provided transportation. We will post more information about this process on our website in a few weeks. No Soldier is authorized to proceed to AIT by any method other than what is coordinated by the government. 13/ 14/ 94- series MOS Soldiers who are attending AIT here at Fort Sill will ship to their gaining unit the afternoon of graduation. They will be given further instructions after they arrive at their AIT unit here on FT. Sill and will be given a pass after in processing there.

The Battery has a Facebook page where photos of your Soldiers in training will be uploaded as often as possible and you will have the opportunity to communicate with the Battery leadership as well as other family members. Questions may be directed through the message service on the page and we will answer them as our work allows. The Battery also has a webpage with the Welcome and Graduation letters posted to it. There you can find some general information about the Battery and Battalion.

HOW DO I GET ON FORT SILL?

FIRST: DO NOT MAIL OR EMAIL ME OR THE UNIT THE ACCESS FORM. IT WILL JUST BE SHREDDED AND DISPOSED OF DUE TO PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION. THIS FORM IS TO BE TURNED IN TO THE VISITOR CONTROL CENTER ONCE YOU ARRIVE AT FORT SILL WITH YOUR STATE and/or PERSONAL ID.

Due to security measures, access to Fort Sill is limited to Department of Defense card holders (The V.A.-issued identification card no longer meets the criteria for installation access) and those individuals who have received a post pass from the Fort Sill Visitor Control Center. Enclosed you will find detailed instructions on how to receive a post pass. It is imperative that you follow these instructions and go to the Visitor Control Center yourself prior to attain a post pass. Failing to do so will cause entry to Fort Sill to be delayed and/or denied. Additionally, please circulate this information to other family and friends that could potentially be attending Family Day and Graduation activities. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

POINTS OF CONTACT

If we can be of assistance to you in any matter relating to your Soldier, please feel free to contact any of the following people by phone or email:

Battery Commander: CPT Fahlmann, Michael D.
Email: Michael.d.fahlmann.mil@mail.mil

580-442-0644

Battery 1SG: 1SG Johnson, Angelo M.
Email: angelo.m.johnson.mil@mail.mil

580-442-5417

Battery Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/alpha131fa/>

THE FACEBOOK PAGE PICTURES WILL BE DELETED AFTER YOUR SOLDIER GRADUATES (25AUG2017), AND BEFORE THE FOLLOWING CLASS STARTS.

Battery Webpage: <http://sill-www.army.mil/434/1-31/alpha/>

Lawton, Oklahoma Chamber-of-Commerce: <http://lawtonfortsillchamber.com/>

“Always First”

Sincerely,

MICHAEL D. FAHLMANN
CPT, FA
Commanding